Rationalisation of duty structure on various materials

1673. SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether the present structure of duty leviable on various materials, inclu ding chemicals used as raw materials for other industries, needs to be rationalised; and

(b) if so, what changes Government may like to make in the said structure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI); (a) and (b) The process of rationalisation of tax structure is a continuing one. Various measures to simplify and rationalise the duty structure have been introduced through the Annual Finance Bills and notifications in the past and further steps will continue to be taken consistent with revenue needs of the Government, and adequate protection to indigenous industry.

Places of Worship along Indo-Pak Border

1674. SHRI F. M. KHAN Will the Ministe,- of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of construction of places of worship along the Indo-Pak border in Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat; and

(b) if so, what steps the Central Government have taken to Put a stop to such activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) According to the information furnisher by the Government of Punjab, construction of a few places of worship has been noticed recently in district Gurdaspur. The concerned authorities have been directed to keep a close watch on the situation.

The Government's of Gujarat and Rajasthan have informed that no construction of places of worship along the border in their States has come to notice.

1675. *[Transferred to the 3rd Decem ber,* 1987].

Effects of Import Liberalisation on local Manufacturers

1676. SHRI AJIT p. K. JOGI; Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that liberalisation of imports has adversely affected the objective of self reliance and that the local manufactures of such pro ducts have not bten able to complete with the imported products for obvious reasons; and

(b) if so, what remedial measures Gov ernment propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) and (b) The objective of self reliance has in no way been compromised by the liberalised import regime. The import policy fully takes into consideration the need for providing legitimate protection to the indigenous industry and full encouragement is given for import substitution.

Destruction of Forests by Mining Operations in Shivpuri and Guna Districts of Madnya Pradesh

1677. SHRl AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased <o state:

(a) whether Government have received reports that vast areas of rich forests have been and are still being destroyed by mi ming operation that have been permitted in Shivpuri and Guna destrict of Madhya Pradesh:

(b) if so, what action has been taken by the Central Government in the matter and;

(c) how many mining and quarry leases have been granted in these two districts during the last three years, area-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) CompIaints were received during 1986 that forest areas were being destroyed by illegal quarrying operations in Shivpuri district.

(b) The area was inspected by an officer from this Ministry and based upon his report, the Madhya Pradesh Government was requested to look into the matter of unauthorised quarry operations and also of the violation of Forest (Cons.) Act, 1980.

(c) The details will be collected and placed on the Tabic of the House.

Incriminating documents seized during raids at Calcutta

1678. SHRl M, S. GURUPADA-SWAMY:

SHRl GAYA CHAND BHUYAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Income Tax Authorities conducted raids at the residential premises of 30 officials and also the residential premises of one Shri Parasmal Lodha in Calcutta as reported in a news item in the Telegraph, Calcutta, dated 17th October, 1987;

(b) whether it is also a fact that several incriminating documents have been seized during the raids;

(c) whether Government have since assessed the economic crime committed by Shri Lodha; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPART MENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI P. K. GADHVI): (a) and (b) The Income-tax authorities have not conducted any searshes in the cases of officials in the Tece it past at Calcutta. The Telegraph (' Calcutta) of 17th October, 1987 carried a report on the front page regarding raids on the previous day in the case of Shri Parasmal Lodha. Search operations u|s 132 of the Income-tax Act were carried out on 15-10-1987 in the cases of Shri Parasmal Lodha and his associates. 29 search warrants were executed in all, Cash of Rs. 1.79 lakhs, jewellery valued at Rs- 12.35 lakhs and shares valued at Rs. 94.79 lakhs were seized during these searches besides the seizure of several incriminating documents.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The outcome of the search will become known only after the completion of assessments.

Export-Import of Polyester Fibre and Filament Yarn

1679. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have allowed the export of polyester fibre and filament yarn;

(b) whether it is also a fact that these items are allowed for import under Open General Licence Scheme; and

(c) so, what are the reasons for this contradictory stand taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI); (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Import of ployester filament yarn is allowed under Open General Licence.

(c) While allowing limited imports the access to imported Polyester Filament Yarn is being kept open to keep a check on domestic price and to ensure easy availability of the material.